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History of Naval Postgraduate School

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2012

## Perspectives on the Naval Postgraduate School

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# Perspectives on the Naval Postgraduate School

This paper offers a perspective of the Naval Postgraduate School by highlighting ideas and opinions of officers and senior leaders.

It is illustrative with quotes drawn from publications and correspondence and reflects important precepts that shaped and defined NPS in formative years and contemporary times.

Beginning long before the information age, high speed computing, terrorism and cyberwar influenced Navy and national security requirements, these quotes capture important, enduring philosophies about the necessity of advanced education to prepare for the future. They demonstrate the vision and guiding principles that formed the foundation for today's NPS.

SCA Working Document No. 2  
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Special Collections Manager  
Dudley Knox Library  
Naval Postgraduate School

December 30, 2014

## 1913

***“...this Postgraduate Department will open many doors...better officers, better specialists...steady and constant progress is assured, keeping pace with advance outside. ”***

Commander Reginald R. Belknap  
In “The Postgraduate Department of the Naval Academy”  
Naval Institute Proceedings, March 1913

## 1916

***“Someone has said that engineering is one part arithmetic and two parts common sense, and that of these the common sense is the more difficult to acquire. Naval post graduate education aims to develop this quality of common sense in the student. He is taught to think logically and his judgment is trained.”***

Lieutenant Commander John J. Halligan  
In “Post Graduate Education in Naval Engineering”  
American Society of Naval Engineers, February 1916

**1917**

***“The specialized experts in the Navy, men who are seagoing and yet both practical and theoretical experts in ordnance, marine, and electrical engineering, and naval construction, and who are capable of design work and development of all mechanisms, are being developed by this Postgraduate School now firmly established at the Academy.***

***These graduates are our most valuable officers.***

***A recent example of the advantage of having such specialists at sea was furnished in September, 1915, when a superdreadnought, by reason of the bursting of the casing of the steam turbine that drove her main circulating pump, would, in all likelihood, have been obliged to leave the fleet for repairs, had it not been for a postgraduate engineer student on board, who, by a scientific calculation of the motor characteristics, of the various motors on board, was enabled to select and doctor up one wherewith to drive the pump and did his task so successfully that the vessel operated at full power during war manoeuvres and was not required to undergo further repair until a month later when she proceeded to dockyard for her routine overhaul.”***

Commander Ralph Earle  
Life at the U.S. Naval Academy  
Chapter 13 “The Postgraduate”  
(pages 262-265)  
G.P. Putnam’s Sons  
New York, 1917

**1919**

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THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGINEERING TO THE NAVY.  
EXTRACTS FROM AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY HON. JOSEPHUS DANIELS, SECRETARY  
OF THE NAVY, AT THE OPENING EXERCISES OF THE POST GRADUATE  
SCHOOL, AT ANNAPOLIS, THURSDAY NIGHT, JUNE 12TH.

***“With automobiles and air-craft making new records on the land and in the air, engineering skill must be applied to faster ships and better working conditions on naval craft...there must be specialization.”***  
***The future of the Navy depends upon the vision to see and translate the larger problems of naval equipment and naval strategy.***

***Here in the Post Graduate School, at the War College, at the Naval Academy, at all the schools is the real motive power which must drive the Navy upon larger seas and for broader usefulness.”***

Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels  
Keynote speech, NPS  
June 12, 1919

## 1920

***"I feel very strongly that something should be done for the education of line officers regardless of the shortage that exists. If we are to wait until all of the service demands are met before starting the education of our officers, I am afraid it will never be done."***

*Captain Ernest J. King, Jr.  
Head, Naval Postgraduate School  
Letter to Admiral William S. Sims, President,  
Naval War College  
December 27, 1920*

*Courtesy Special Collections & Archives, U.S. Naval Academy*

***"The officers of the United States Navy were the first to use torpedoes, submarines, sea planes, airplane carriers, antennae mines; the first to develop electric propulsion for naval vessels; the first to conceive the all big-gun ship and the torpedo plane...technical initiative is vital to success in war."***

*Commander William S. Pye  
Testimony delivered June 3, 1920,  
U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Naval Affairs*

## 1930

***"About 1900, interest in post-graduate education began to quicken throughout the Navy because the great improvements in ship design, marine engineering, electricity, ordnance material, and naval accessories, and the increase in educational standards throughout the United States made it plainly evident that four years at the Naval Academy was not sufficient to give officers the technical knowledge necessary to carry on the various duties to which they might be assigned."***

*Captain W.D. Puleston  
In "The Cultured Naval Officer"  
Scientific American, May 1930*

**1939**

***"When I became Chief of Bureau of Navigation in June 1939 - my first act was to send for the BuNav War Plans. To my horror - I learned that on 'D' Day - it was planned to close down the Naval War College and the Naval Post Graduate School in order to provide officers for an expanding Fleet - as was done on 'D' Day for WWI.***

***I immediately cancelled those plans and prepared for expanded classes at both the War College & P.G. School."***

*Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz  
Letter to Vice Admiral Charles Melson  
President, Naval War College  
September 24, 1965*

**1944**

***"The objective of the system of Naval Education is to .. produce .. officers capable of exercising high command in time of war with skill, imagination, and determination."***

*Vice Admiral William S. Pye  
President, Naval War College  
March 28, 1944  
Board to Study the Methods  
of Educating Naval Officers*

**1948**

***" Real leaders are seldom if ever born. They are developed by education and experience.***

***We must build educationally now for the future; adequate engineering education must be considered as a primary prerequisite for future national security."***

*Captain Herman Spanagel  
Superintendent, Naval Postgraduate School  
In "Postgraduate Education for U.S. Navy Personnel"  
Journal of Engineering Education, October 1948*

***" The technical advances of the past century have brought complexities to naval war which have made mandatory a comprehensive Naval Postgraduate School.***

***In establishing the Postgraduate School at Monterey we have reaffirmed conviction that sea power rests on science."***

*Vice Admiral Thomas L. Sprague  
Chief, Bureau of Naval Personnel  
Letter to S.F.B. Morse  
Published in Monterey Herald, May 22, 1948*

**1952**

***"Nothing is more important for the advancement of Naval science and the future greatness of the American Navy than to provide adequate opportunity for its officers to carry on their advanced study and individual research.***

***This school provides this opportunity."***

*Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball  
Keynote speech dedicating NPS in Monterey  
February 1952*

**1959**

***"Rapid technological advance...did not come by accident, nor did it come overnight. It has been the result of educating carefully selected officers in each succeeding generation of officers.***

***This year we mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of this splendid school. The naval leaders of 50 years ago showed great perspective and foresight in seeing the need for advanced technical and scientific knowledge among naval officers. They recognized that ships and naval weapons were becoming more complex, that their proper employment at sea would require officers who were familiar not only with the ageold profession of the sea, but who could understand and could use effectively the complex weapons of the years to come.***

***We in the Navy today are the inheritors of that legacy of wisdom, and we can see clear evidence of their foresight all around us."***

***Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Chief of Naval Operations  
Commencement speech  
Naval Postgraduate School  
May 28, 1959***

***Special Collections & Archives  
Dudley Knox Library, NPS***

**1970**

***"The constant search for improvement, the realistic responsiveness to the Navy's requirements, the solid reputation for educational excellence, and the unchanging objective of providing the best possible service to the officer student and the Navy - these are the assets which make for an unsurpassed potential for growth as the PG School enters its second 60 years of service."***

***Rear Admiral Robert McNitt  
Superintendent, Naval Postgraduate School  
In "The Naval Postgraduate School:  
60 Years Young"  
Naval Institute Proceedings  
June 1970***

**1991**

***“Secretary of the Navy Lawrence Garret has described the school (NPS) as ‘the front line of the future.’ In this decade of shrinking defense budgets and decreasing force structures, military officers will be tasked with the creation of sound and cost-efficient national security strategies. Future leaders must be capable of quick and insightful analysis of problems and issues. They must make timely, effective decisions, sometimes under conditions of great uncertainty, as well as be able to accomplish complex tactical missions with highly constrained resources. The Naval Postgraduate School readies DoD’s officer and civilian personnel to meet these challenges.”***

*Rear Admiral Ralph West, Jr.  
Superintendent  
Naval Postgraduate School  
In “Preparing Tomorrow’s Experts”  
Defense 91 Magazine  
May/June 1991*

**2000**

***“The impact of new military technologies as a determinant of victory in World War II reaffirmed the importance of the Navy’s advanced technical education program. A series of post-war Secretary of the Navy instructions and Congressional acts redefined the scope and authority of the Naval Postgraduate School and laid the foundation for the present-day institution.”***

*John Sanders  
In Professional Military Education in the United States: A Historical Dictionary  
Greenwood Press  
2000*



**2002**

***“The best and brightest military officers from the United States and around the world come to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, to work with world class faculty on real military and defense problems. At NPS, they gain both the intellectual know how and the practical skills for improving defense technologies, systems and programs.”***

George H. W. Bush  
41st President of the United States

**2011**

***“As Secretary of Defense, obviously I look at the myriad challenges that face this country – a range of security challenges that come from a lot of different directions. As a result, [we] require the kind of leaders who are knowledgeable, who are creative, who are strategic, who understand the steps that have to be taken if we are to protect this country.”***

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta  
Secretary of the Navy Guest Lecture  
King Hall  
August 23, 2011

**2012**

***“This school is a crown jewel for the military. It’s got a great faculty and great talent...It is a unique institution, there is nothing like it anywhere in the world.”***

Rep. Sam Farr  
Statement during a campus visit,  
December 2012